



Emotional Smarts

How to Raise Your Quotient

by Harvey Deutschendorf

The role of emotional intelligence (EI) in helping to facilitate success and happiness in individual lives has become well accepted. People with high EI tend to share seven habits.

Focus on the positive. While not ignoring bad news, EI people have made a conscious decision to not spend much time and energy focusing on problems. Rather, they look at what's positive in a situation and seek solutions. They focus on what can be done and what's within their control.

Associate only with positive people. High EI people regard complainers and negative people as energy drains. They tend to avoid them to maintain their own vitality. Instead, they spend time with those that look on the bright side of life. They tend to smile and laugh and attract other positive people. Their warmth, openness and caring attitude leads others to regard them as more trustworthy.

Set boundaries and assert a position. Although their friendly, open nature may make them appear as pushovers to some, people with high EI are able to set boundaries and assert themselves when necessary; they demonstrate politeness and consideration, yet stay firm. High EI people guard their time and commitments and know when they need to say no.

They don't make needless enemies. Their response to potentially volatile situations is measured, not inflated, and managed appropriately. They think before speaking, allowing themselves time to calm down if their emotions start to feel overwhelming.

Practice forward thinking and willingness to let go of the past. People with high EI are too busy thinking of future possibilities to dwell upon things that didn't work out in the past. They apply lessons learned from past missteps in taking future actions. They never see failure as permanent or a personal reflection of themselves.

Look for ways to make life more fun, happy and interesting. At work, at home and with friends, high EI people know what makes them happy and look for opportunities to expand the enjoyment. They receive pleasure and satisfaction from seeing others happy and fulfilled, and do whatever they can to brighten someone else's day.

Expend energy wisely. High EI folks don't hold onto anger over how others have treated them, but use the incident to create awareness of how to not let it happen again. While they move on and forgive, they don't forget, and are unlikely to be taken advantage of again in the same set of circumstances.

Always learn and grow. High EI people are lifelong learners, constantly growing and evolving. Being critical thinkers, they are open to changing their minds if someone presents a better idea. They trust themselves and their own judgment to make the best decision for themselves.

*Harvey Deutschendorf is an emotional intelligence expert, speaker and author of *The Other Kind of Smart*. Take the EI Quiz at www.theotherkindofsmart.com/ei-quiz*